

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

1. A data reading apparatus for reading and/or scanning data from a first and second scanned medium comprising:

first transportation rollers for conveying said first scanned medium along a first transportation path having an inlet end and an exit;

second transportation rollers for conveying said second scanned medium along a second transportation path having an inlet end separate from the inlet end of the first transportation path; and

a data reader for reading and/or scanning data from either the first or the second scanned medium respectively;

wherein the first transportation path and the second transportation path have a common mutually shared middle transportation path through which both the first scanned medium and the second scanned medium pass when being transported by said first and the second transportation rollers with the data reader being disposed along said middle transportation path.

2. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, wherein the first transportation path comprises:

first straight transportation path;

first curved transportation path connected between the first straight transportation path and middle transportation path for changing the direction of transportation for the first scanned medium 90 degrees as seen from the first straight transportation path;

a second curved transportation path connected to the middle transportation path for changing the direction of transportation for the first scanned medium another 90 degrees as seen from the middle transportation path; and

a second straight transportation path connected to the second curved transportation path.

3. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, wherein the second transportation path comprises:

an insertion opening for inserting the second scanned medium into the middle transportation path; and

a reversing transportation path connected to the middle transportation path for reversing the direction of transportation of the second scanned medium from the direction through the insertion opening.

4. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, wherein the first transportation path and the second transportation path each have a reference bottom with the reference bottom of the second transportation path being disposed at a height different from the height of the first transportation path reference bottom such that the transportation height of the first and second scanned medium is different when read by said data reader.

5. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 4, further comprising a guide for guiding the change in transportation direction of the first scanned medium along the second curved transportation path, with said guide being disposed at a height spaced from the reference bottom of the second transportation path.

6. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 4, comprising a first pressure member disposed above the reference bottom of the second transportation path for pressing the first or the second scanned medium to the data reader; and

second pressure member disposed below the reference bottom of the second transportation path for pressing the first scanned medium to the data reader.

7. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 6, wherein the lower pressure member is a dropping prevention member

preventing the second scanned medium from dropping below the reference bottom of the second transportation path.

8. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 4, comprising a first pressure roller disposed above the reference bottom of the second transportation path for transporting the first or the second scanned medium; and

second pressure roller disposed below the reference bottom of the second transportation path for transporting the first scanned medium.

9. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, comprising a print head disposed along the first transportation path for printing to the first scanned medium.

10. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, wherein the data reader is an image scanning sensor for capturing an image of the first or the second scanned medium.

11. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, wherein the data reader is magnetic sensor for reading magnetic data on the first or the second scanned medium.

12. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, wherein the first scanned medium is composed of a bendable material, and the second scanned medium is composed of a material composition difficult to bend.

13. A data reading apparatus as described in claim 1, comprising a medium detector disposed along the second transportation path for detecting the leading edge and trailing edge of the second scanned medium respectively;

wherein transportation of the second scanned medium is controlled according to a detection signal from the medium detector.